

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. - 31. (cancelled)

32. (new) A substrate based on paper fibres of a non-woven type, obtained by a dry method comprising a thermoplastic binder enabling the fibres to bind together and an antimicrobial agent selected from the group consisting of zinc, silver and copper gluconates, said antimicrobial agent being present in said substrate at a concentration between 0.01 and 10% by weight, thereby conferring antimicrobial properties to said substrate.

33. (new) The substrate according to claim 32, wherein said substrate comprises 0.05 to 1% by weight of said antimicrobial agent.

34. (new) The substrate of claim 32 wherein said antimicrobial agent is zinc gluconate.

35. (new) The substrate of claim 32 wherein said thermoplastic binder is selected from the group consisting of latexes and thermally binding fibres.

36. (new) The substrate according to claim 35, wherein said thermoplastic binder is ethylene vinyl acetate copolymer.

37. (new) The substrate according to claim 32, wherein said antimicrobial agent is incorporated within said substrate by spraying a liquid mixture comprising said thermoplastic binder and said antimicrobial agent on to the substrate or by impregnation or induction of said substrate with said mixture.

38. (new) The substrate according to claim 32, which is an article selected from the group consisting of sanitary articles, hygiene articles and food packagings.

39. (new) The substrate of claim 38, which is selected from the group consisting of impregnated towels and absorbing papers.

40. (new) The substrate according to claim 38, which is selected from the group consisting of feminine hygiene articles and diapers for babies.

41. (new) The substrate according to claim 38, which is an absorbent paper for meat trays.